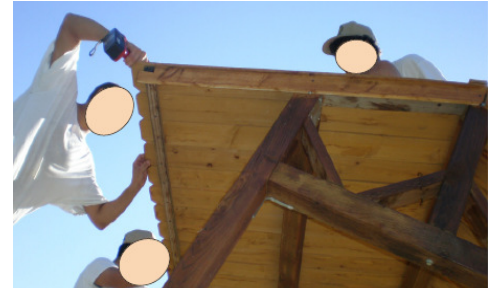


# JCC-Nampa Juveniles Take Pride in the Fruits of Their Labor

In July 2008, Superintendent Grimm contacted Mr. Blume, one of Choices Group Leaders, to let him know that there was leftover concrete from the Phase 3 construction to pour an 8 ft. by 8 ft. pad. The problem was figuring out what to do with it within seven days. The Aztec group went out and located the best spot for the concrete to be poured, and the idea was to build something that would provide a little shade during the heat of summer. The group figured that instead of an 8 ft. by 8 ft. square, a 5 ft. by 11 ft. configuration would work best for the pre-existing picnic tables. When the truck arrived to pour the concrete, it quickly became evident that the amount of concrete was overestimated; two more bags of concrete were added to fill the form. Various group members provided sketches with designs for the structure itself. A combination of staff donations and funding through Educational/Vocational monies supplied the lumber necessary for the project. The Aztec juveniles did all the measuring, cutting, bolting, and staining of the structure. It has survived its first couple of big windstorms! This project provided the opportunity for juveniles to work together in such a way as to encourage cooperation to complete something positive within their own small community (the back yard).



In addition to the shade structure the group was also able to complete the stairway started the year before. The stairway consisted of railroad ties uprooted from the previous year's garden. The garden was demolished to make way for the new construction, and the ties were piled along with other construction debris. The group salvaged them and began the process of building a stairway to the low element course area. This started in the fall of 2007 and Mr. Blume can remember late October nights with the group with juveniles chiseling, picking, and shoveling to get the ties in and level. He states, "It was good to wrap that up."

On the evening of August 16, 2008, they had their first camp out! The evening slowed as the group sat around the fire pit and began cooking their dinner. The group was allowed to burn papers on which they had written out their personal resentments. A few shared theirs aloud with the group. It was a quiet and reflective time. When all had their turn the group began with scary stories and bad jokes. *There was a good joke or two in there, too.* Most of the group retired to their tents at 1:00 a.m., and a few endured till 2:00 a.m.



Mr. Blume shared, "As an employee of the Department I am thankful for the opportunities (however limited) that I have to help the juveniles in our custody experience normal activities like sitting around a camp fire. I have a head full of future projects and no real idea if they will ever come to fruition or not. I intend to get fruit trees planted this fall, and build an arbor and a fish pond next year. I can't wait to see how the group will work together (or not) to get these things done. The legacy of previous group projects has benefited the current Choices community, and the pride with which they speak about what they have accomplished is reward enough to spend those 100-degree evenings out there with them."